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in dances. In front of most houses rises a short totem-pole,[1] either pierced for the doorway, or standing on the opposite side of the sidewalk.

The Family

It is probably no exaggeration to say that in every part of the world the most important social unit is the family. It certainly is among the Bella Coola, yet its lack of definite social obligations makes it difficult to define. Reduced to minimum size, the family consists of a man, his wife, or wives, and his children. Such a unit occupies one of the bedrooms of a large house, and it is to such a family that an infant automatically belongs at birth. Disregarding for the moment ceremonial obligations, which are shared by others, it is the father and mother who are responsible largely for the upbringing of the child. Such education as he receives comes from them, with the assistance of members of the ancestral family. This is chiefly imitative; a boy, as he increases in strength, follows his father on hunting expeditions or fishing. The mother teaches her daughters how to make baskets, and they follow her when she gathers berries, or when she cooks and performs household duties. The Bella Coola are fond of children, in many cases to the extent of over-indulging them, and they grow up amid the open life of the large houses, absorbing information of all kinds without being aware of so doing.

Only two kinds of functional training need be mentioned. A wise father carefully trains his sons to remember their debts (I, p. 369), and the method of teaching ancient myths has already been described; otherwise there is little direct instruction. On the other hand, parents devote great care to furnishing their children with every possible means of strengthening their supernatural elements on which success depends. These can

[1] Since the Bella Coola believe that totem-poles were used by their ancestors in early times, they are included in this description of a village, without reference to their development in post-European times. This account is compiled from descriptions given by elderly informants; it is inevitable, therefore, that changes due to European contact may be included.

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855 well, and these are soon learnt by the child who is fortunate
[867] enough to have many kinsmen. Primarily, responsibility rests with the parents for the care and support of their offspring, but they have the advice, assistance, and material aid of their relatives. Nor are these limited to the near kindred of either father or mother; all members of the ancestral family take their part. Housemates, also, even if unrelated, take an interest in any child who shares their habitation, irrespective of his rank.

Much of the care bestowed on children is of a magical nature and must be reserved until a later chapter. Little boys
868 follow their fathers on hunting expeditions and so acquire knowledge by practical experience, as do girls from their mothers with regard to household tasks and feminine occupations.
867 Even small children are quick to notice the attention paid to the orders of chiefs, and carry out their commands without
861 demur. A disobedient child is beaten or thrown into cold water; the parents usually act in such cases, though a near relative does not hesitate to do so, especially if he is a chief.
857 Like all other children, Bella Coola boys and girls are fond of
867 stories and listen eagerly to the tales told in the long evenings by some old man or woman. Many of these are somewhat
538 obscene, but they serve to teach much ancient lore, and at the same time to emphasize many taboos and restrictions which are thus assimilated without definite schooling. They illus-
[626] trate the laws of morality, as does the public disapproval shown to anyone who infringes some point of etiquette or behaviour.
[825] If a child makes fun of a cat-fish or a bull-head, he is not told to stop doing so; instead, one of his elders tells him how, in the distant past, there was a famine, and advises him not to scoff at the fish which alone saved his ancestors from starvation at that time. If a rude little boy laughs at a maimed or deformed
[732] man, he is told of *Ălălăls*, a Bella Bella urchin who repeatedly mocked a one-eyed man and presently, himself, lost the sight of an eye.

867 "Don't laugh at cripples, blind people, or those who are
[735]

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poverty-stricken," say the elders. "If you do, you will become like them yourself." 867 [735]

As a boy grows older, his father insists that he wash, pray, and practise other ritual acts likely to win approval from supernatural beings. He is frequently beaten to inure him to hardship. By the time a youth is eleven or twelve years of age he has become fully acquainted with the principles of the potlatch system and a wise parent teaches him to remember debts. Taking his son to some quiet spot in the woods, he makes a small bundle of cedar twigs, for example, and tells him: 869 [861] 211 867

"So-and-so at Bella Bella gave you fifteen beaver skins. When you see this bundle you must think of those skins."

Then he takes another bunch, perhaps of spruce twigs, to represent a present from a Rivers Inlet chief. A bundle of nettle fibre may stand for a Kimsquit debt; one ornamented with a tuft of undyed cedar-bark, a gift from a *Täl·io* chief; a solid piece of alder stem, a local debt; another section of alder stem with a notch in it, another local debt, and so on. The son is expected to listen attentively, and to repeat after his father what each represents. Then the pupil turns his back and the instructor alters the positions of the bundles. His father tells him to look at them and repeat what each signifies. This is repeated time after time until a boy becomes familiar with remembering debts by means of symbols. In later years, if he becomes a chief, he will use this method for bearing his indebtedness in mind. No system of standardized signs has been evolved, each individual merely designates what he wishes by a mark which he alone can recognize.

A child grows up in the community, absorbing information and lore without conscious effort, learning the activities which he will later practise, fearing the supernatural beings that are dreaded by his parents, marvelling at the power of those endowed with supernatural ability, and generally fitting himself for the struggle of life. If his parents are wealthy, he may be fortunate enough to be given a *sisaok* name and to partake in 867 [556]

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thus boast that she has three sets of teeth, but as the practice has not found favour in Bella Coola, it is little to her advantage.[8]

These complicated marriage rites are necessary to satisfy the pride of the two families in their origin myths, and the need to establish the resultant children in the paths of their ancestors. Among slaves or others who lack ancestral prerogatives, marriage is an affair of slight worth. Such persons simply live together with little ceremony, though they always try to give at least a feast so that there may be witnesses of the transaction. It is immaterial whether or not they marry their own relatives, since no ancestral prerogatives are to be transmitted.

MARRIED LIFE

Y usually lives in the house of X's father, though economic circumstances may compel her husband to live in her home. If the parents are very wealthy, a house may be built for the young people, but usually their home is one of the bedrooms in the house of X's father; this patrilocal residence exposes Y not only to good advice from her mother-in-law, but often to caustic criticism. The married life of X and Y does not differ materially from that of other young couples in any part of the world, and is accordingly difficult to describe. Although love rarely enters into the original choice of a mate, a serviceable substitute is found in the mutual respect for each other's ancestry, and the knowledge of the importance of the rites performed with the aid of each other's elderly relatives. The young people realize that marriage affects the families of both, and accordingly accept it as a matter of course. The Bella Coola are fond of children. Their birth is a matter of sincere rejoicing, partly because it binds the two families more closely together, but parental affection is one of the strongest Bella Coola characteristics. The parents usually spoil their children; infants, especially, are never chastised and rarely

[8] The board used on this occasion was purchased for the National Museum of Canada, Ottawa.

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855 rebuked. They grow up in the open environment of the houses, absorbing more of their lore by watching and imitating than by actual instruction. Their care devolves chiefly on the mother, although at any ceremony the father will be seen arriving with the baby in his arms, while his wife leads another child. Nurses are unknown, and the parents take their children with them on all occasions; if it is necessary for a mother to be absent on some arduous toil, her child will be entrusted to a grandmother or other elderly relative. There are no avoidances between the young people and their parents-in-law.

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The obligation of present-giving does not stop with the marriage ceremony. Whenever X gives a *kusiut* dance or other ceremony, Y's relatives are expected to contribute. It is felt that the weight of the presents given them during the period of engagement and at the wedding has become too heavy, and they throw this off by lavish giving. No count is kept of the value of gifts bestowed or received, though it is known that the family of the woman loses financially in the end. The father of many daughters is regarded as an unfortunate individual, who is always poor and overworked through the necessity of providing for them. By so doing, however, he increases his own prestige, and the Bella Coola have the happy sentiment that such a man manages to get along some way; perhaps necessity rouses his ambition. Likewise X's relatives contribute to any ritual carried out by Y's father. If, for example, one of his wife's relatives dies, X and his friends may wish to contribute towards the funeral expenses. In fact, any ceremonial serves as an excuse for relatives by marriage to donate goods and thus demonstrate publicly their influence, importance, and generosity.

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The concept of mutual help between families who have intermarried is one that lasts for generations. In 1922 there was in Bella Coola an old Kimsquit man who had left home some forty years earlier and had since lived in Smith Inlet where he married and had a boy. On the death of his wife, this

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of fur. Even at the present time, the death of a new-born child is usually attributed to omission of this precaution.

A Kimsquit man mentioned that he had once shot a marten during his wife's pregnancy, and had failed to preserve a piece of the skin. The bullet had passed through the head, making a hole in the cheek-bone beneath the eye. He thought no more of the incident until after the birth of a daughter with a blemish on her cheek in the same place as the wound on the marten's. The spot grew bigger, and the flesh began to mortify until the infant died a few weeks later. Her face resembled that of the animal and he is convinced that his loss was caused, in some way, by the marten.

To Cure Indigestion

Kill a raven, cut out a morsel of flesh from beneath its left wing, and then remove the heart. Place both in the infant's mouth and leave them there until wet with saliva. Replace them in the bird's body and tie a strip of dyed cedar-bark around its neck. Carry the carcass to some lonely spot in the mountains and hide it beneath a jutting rock where no water can penetrate. This cures the child. If, however, anyone should find the raven's body before the flesh has decayed, the patient would die.

This remedy, widely employed for small children, was used with success by an informant for his young daughter. It is not sufficiently potent for adults.

To Cure Crying

The Bella Coola consider that crying is not only unpleasant, but actively displeasing to the supernatural beings who permit it at death alone. Consequently, the persistent wailing of a child is likely to cause the death of a relative in order that the tears shed may have justification. Many stories illustrate this theme; in fact, to cry for no real reason is practically taboo. A mother quiets a fretting child by saying:

"Do you want your father and me to die?"

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If the father dies, she beats her son or daughter, adding: "Cry now. See what you did."

Henceforth the child restrains himself, but usually drastic steps are taken to reform an infant before his weeping causes any such misfortune. The parents of a petulant child request aid from a man of even temperament to cure him. The person undertaking the task prepares a large basket, watches until he notices the youngster crying and displaying bad temper, then seizes the offender, thrusts him into the basket and hangs it in the doorway, free to move with every stir of the child shut within.

"Cry as much as you like now," he says. "If you become hoarse like a heron you will turn into one of those birds."

This threat is based on an ancient story describing how a child to whom this was done changed into a heron and flapped away in bird form. Sometimes the man says that the same will happen to the child, or simply that he will be able to fly like a heron. All day he is left suspended, no one heeding his sobbing and howling, but in the evening he is taken down, petted, and told not to be naughty again. This medicine always cures a petulant child who can thenceforth be held to ridicule by being reminded that he is "A Basket Boy." The same remedy is often employed for a quarrelsome brother and sister who are shut up together.

To Cure Disobedience and Rudeness

If a child is persistently rude and disobedient to his parents, they request the assistance of a man of even temperament to cure him. The person selected must be one who is never angry, and who attends to his own business in a placid, quiet manner. The mother and father discuss who is best fitted by character to help their erring child and then ask his aid, promising a suitable recompense. If the man accepts the task, he waits till he notices the child crying peevishly. Running to him, he holds the youngster firmly and, in spite of this strug-

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gles, bites him between the eyes or at the back of the neck so that a little blood flows. 865 861

"If you don't keep quiet," he says to the screaming child, "I shall bite you all over your head."

This medicine acts in two ways: (1) The offender is so frightened that he is likely to reform; (2) Contact with a man of good disposition imparts the same to him. A tuft of mountain goat wool is inserted into the wound to make it heal properly.

To Cure Disobedience and Laziness 461

Parents whose child exhibits these bad qualities also ask help of a man of good character. If he accepts the task, he provides himself with a bone needle and waits until he hears the child refuse to perform some simple task. Then, with a rush, he throws the offender on his stomach and supposits the needle until the blood flows freely. He then releases the frightened child who usually slinks away to bed for the rest of the day. When the bleeding has ceased, the quiet person cuts chips from the canoe of an energetic man and rubs them on the wound, saying: 865 861

"Please, may you be like the canoe, always active and doing whatever is expected of you."

An old Kimsquit man recalled vividly the application of this medicine to him when he refused to fetch water for his mother. He was about eleven years of age at the time and asserted that it had greatly improved his behaviour.

MEDICINES FOR ORDINARY DISEASES

For Sprains and Bruises 752

Pound stalks of false hellebore, mix with hemlock gum, and bind on the injured spot as a poultice.

For Swollen Neck

Cut off small pieces of a thoroughly smoked bear's heart, pound in water, and drink the mixture. 757

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Sinuxɛtl: One of the first men to settle in the Dean River valley in the beginning of time.

Sinuximɛtl: 1—"Right Hand": Name of a *Stuix* repository derived from a supernatural creature.
2—*Kusiut* name of a Bella Coola woman.

sio°msta: Intangible *kusiut* prerogative of imitating coitus. [424]

sipɛlxɛlosuts: Song sung by a *kusiotem* dancer on recovery from apparent death. [861]

sipkim: Regular beatings given to a male child.

Siqɛlxam, "Time for Gathering Fern Root": Fourth moon after the summer solstice. [805]

Siqɛlusnɛm: Rain after storm, anthropomorphized. This presumably refers to rain that comes after violent thunder. [821]

Siqulxwaix di Siut, "The Gathering of the Supernatural Beings": Fifth moon after the summer solstice. [805]

siqwaldjut: Term of opprobrium applied to one who will not allow his children to perform ceremonial dances. [626]

siqwsɛk: Outright bestowal of a prerogative at marriage. [425]

sisasts: Departure to a new locality.

sisi, vocative, sisai: Father's brother or mother's brother. [601]

sisut: Paddle.

sisutsta: Dangerous power such as is present at various petrified places. [501]

Sithmsta: One of the names of the supreme god.

Sitlliuq': Ancestral name of a Bella Coola woman. [778]

siut, vocative, siaot: 1—Any supernatural being, the significance being, "Learned."
2—Supernatural power of any kind.
3—Synonym for *qomo·ts,* the large *sisaok* whistle.
4—Killer whale. [825]
5—Song.
6—*Kusiut* name of one of the first men to settle at Kimsquit in the beginning of time.

Siutan·i: Part of a peculiar repository.

Siutamkila: Celebrated Bella Coola warrior.

siutnɛlos: Wordless chorus. [533]

Siwal·os, "Where Canoes Are Left": Village on the upper Kimsquit River.

Siwid: Celebrated *Djoldɛmx* chief living in the last century.

sixdiktam: 1—Expedition without definite objective, made by a despondent person. [828]
2—Individual making such a journey. [484]

Sixman·a: 1—Daughter of the supreme god.
2—*Kusiut* name of a Bella Coola woman.

sixsan·imutsta: Place where healing power is petrified.

Sixsixɛ̨utnam: Synonym for *Mɛlakila,* the supernatural being connected with *sisaok* rites.

sixwismaq: *Kusiut* dance or object used in the land above which serves as pattern or model, *ɛnɛnuskx,* for the user's protégé on earth.

sixwoɬaxkmak: Actual goods used for the "Opening," the first public announcement of a forthcoming marriage. [584]

sixwoot: Unmarried mother. [848]

siyɛutla: To perform the services of a herald to a master, especially the proper direction of all chiefly rites. The word *siɛutla* may be connected with this.